

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2527

INFO USIA WASHDC

ALL AMCONSULS CANADA

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 OTTAWA 00676

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCEN, CA

SUBJ: CANADIAN REACTION PRESIDENT CARTER

1. A LEADING CANADIAN HISTORIAN RECENTLY POINTED OUT TO EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT HISTORICALLY CANADIANS HAVE CONDUCTED "PROLONGED LOVE AFFAIRS" WITH SOME OF OUR PRESIDENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, ROOSEVELT AND TRUMAN. RAWLYK THINKS HE SEES BEGINNINGS OF SUCH ATTACHMENTS TO PRESIDENT CARTER CITING PARTICULARLY THE PRESIDENT'S OPENNES AND MODESTY. WHILE RAWLYK'S HYPOTHESIS MAY BE OVERSTATED THERE IS LITTE DOUBT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS MADE A VERY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION ON CANADIANS SINCE HIS ELECTION AND INAUGURAL.. PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS AND WITH OUR CONSULS GENERAL THROUGHOUT CANADA INDICATE THAT CANADIANS ARE IMPRESSED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S SIMPLICITY AND OPENNESS. MANY COMMENTED ON THE PRESIDENT'S WALK DOWNM PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE FOLLOWING THE INAUGURAL CEREMONIES AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE PRESIDENT'S DETERMINATION TO BE A MAN OF THE PEOPLE.

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WM MEDIA COMMENT ON PRESIDENT CARTER ON THE WHOLE HAS BEEN VERY POSITIVE. RECENT EXAMPLE IN THE FRENCH LANGUAGE PRESS INCLUDE MARCEL ADAM WRITING IN LA PRESSRE FEB. 5 ABOUT CARTER'S FIRESIDE TALK.

"A STYLE FROM WHICH RHETORIC IS PUT ASIDE FOR AN HONEST EXPOSE OF FACTS WITH A REFRESHING STYLE FREE

OF PATHOS, OF POST ELECTORAL PROMISES AND OF RANCOR. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS THE PRESIDENT CONSIDERS HIS LISTENERS AS ADULTS NOT AS POTENTIAL ELECTORS." ANOTHER FRENCH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER THE PRESTIGIOUS LE DEVOIR CARRIED A VOLUMN BY GEORGE VIGNY WHO REFERRED TO THE SIMPLICITY, HONESTY, AND NON-MYSTIFIED ATMOSPHERE AND "OUVERTURED ESPERIT" OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. THE MONTREAL GAZETTE AND MONTREAL STAR HAVE ALSO PRAISED PRESIDENT CARTER. TYPICAL IS THE LINE TAKEN BY THE MONTREAL STAR EDITORIAL FEB 12TH RE THE WARNKE NOMINATION "WHAT MIGHT WELL DISTURB THE HAWKS IS THAT THIS PRESIDENT IS NOT PREPARED TO RUBBERSTAMP THE RECOMMENDATIONS AS READILY AS SOME OF HIS RECENT PREDECESSORS APPEAR TO HAVE DONE." THE CONGEN TORONTO REPORTS THAT THE PRESIDENT'S OPENNESS AND INFORMALITY IS CONSIDERED MOST ATTRACTIVE TO TORONTONIANS BUT THAT THEY ARE RESERVING JUDGMENT ON CARTER'S PROGRAMS. DENNIS BRAITHWAITE IN HIS FEB. 6 TV RADIO COLUMN IN THE TORONTO STAR COMPARED THE PRESIDENT'S SEARCH FOR "OTHER WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE" TO PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S APPARENT DETERMINATION TO "SHUT OFF THE FLOW OF INFORMATION TO CANADIANS." HE CONTINUED "THE CARTER THEORY OF GOVERNING IS THAT THE MORE THE PEOPLE KNOW THE BETTER IT WILL BE FOR EVERYBODY ESPECIALLY THE GOVERNMENT." THE INFORMALITY ASPECT APPEALS BECAUSE ONTARIANS CONSIDER IT NATURAL AND PROFESS TO DISLIKE POMP AND THE IMPERIAL CONCEPT OF GOVERNMENT. TORONTO SUN OF FEB 16 UNDER THE HEADING "BUSY JIM" UNCLASSIFIED

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SAID "THAT IN HIS FIRST MONTH CARTER HAS BROUGHT VERVE AND STYLE TO THE PRESIDENCY AND A FEELING THAT THE RECENT PAST REALLY IS DEAD, BURIED, FINISHED. HIS INFORMALITY IS ENCOURAGING AS ARE HIS CORNY FIRESIDE CHATS." THE SUN TERMED HIS DRAFT DODGER AMNESTY GENEROUS AND CONTROVERSIAL AND NOTED IT "PROBABLY OFFENDS HIM AS A FORMER NAVAL OFFICER" BUT CONTINUES THAT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO PARDON DESERTERS. THE SUN TERMS THE SORENSON NOMINATION AND THE APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG AS "MISTAKES" BUT COMMENED THE PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AS "AN ENCOURAGING SWITCH" FROM THE KISSINGER POLICY OF NOT OFFENDING THE KREMLIN.

CONGEN VANCOUVER REPORTS THAT BRITISH COLUMBIANS LIKE WHAT LITTLE THEY HAVE SEEN OF PRESIDENT CARTER IN ACTION BUT AGREE WITH TORONTO THAT A "WAIT AND SEE" ATTITUDE PREVAILS. BRITISH COLUMBIANS LIKE THE PRESIDENT'S INFORMALITY, MODESTY AND DOWN-TO-EARTH WAYS;

HIS VIEWS ON NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND ON THE ENVIRONMENT WERE WELL RECEIVED; HIS SELECTION OF CABINET MEMBERS EVOKED FAVORABLE RESPONSES INCLUDING SEVERAL EDITORIALS IN THE VANCOUVER SUN. THE PRESIDENTIAL PARDON OF DRAFT EVADERS ALSO HAS B.C. PUBLIC APPROVAL.

MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE WHICH GENERALLY FOLLOWS A NATIONALIST LINE WITH ANTI-U.S. OVERTONES HAS BEEN CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION. MACLEAN'S CATALOGUES CAMPAIGN PROMISES SUCH AS CUTTING UNEMPLOYMENT, STIMULATING THE LAGGING ECONOMY, RESTRAINING INFLATION, REORGANIZING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, BALANCING THE BUDGET BY 1980 AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT. MACLEAN'S COMMENTED "IF HE CAN BRING IT OFF HIS NEXT TRICK WILL BE TO WALK ACROSS THE SHENANDOAH RIVER BAREFOOT." HOWEVER, MACLEAN'S DESCRIBES PRESIDENT CARTER AS UNCLASSIFIED

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A "STRONG WILLED INDIVIDUAL WHO PRIDES HIMSELF IN MAKING HIS OWN DECISIONS - HE WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITH THEM GOOD OR BAD."

THE MOST NEGATIVE COMMENT ON THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WAS WRITTEN BY WASHINGTON-BASED MACLEAN'S CORRESPONDENT WALTER STEWART WHO WROTE UNDER THE HEADING "GOD BLESS

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 OTTAWA 00676

THE MAKEUP OF THE CARTER CABINET COMMENTING "THE NEW SECRETARY OF HUD IS A HUNDRED THOUSAND A YEAR LAWYER WITH THREE COMPANY DIRECTORSHIPS AND A REPUTATION FOR ARROGANCE. THAT SHOULD BE GOOD FOR THE POOR FOLKS. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WAS A HARDLINE JUDGE ON BUSSING AND A MEMBER OF THREE CLUBS THAT EXCLUDE JEWS AND BLACKS. THAT SHOULD BE NICE FOR MINORITIES. CARTER'S 'DEFENSE CLUSTER' CONSISTS ENTIRELY OF MEN WHO WERE TERRIBLY WRONG ON THE CRUCIAL, MORAL ISSUE OF THEIR NATION, VIETNAM, ALTHOUGH THEY LATER RECANTED. CYRUS VANCE THE NEW SECRETARY OF STATE WAS DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE IN THE MID-SIXTIES AND A "TROUBLE-SHOOTER" FOR LBJ. STEWART TERMED ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI AS "ONE OF THE SOARING ACADEMIC HAWKS OF THAT ERA."

3. HOWEVER, STEWART'S VENOM WAS VERY MUCH THE EXCEPTION RATHER THAN THE RULE. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS CANADIANS GENERALLY EXPRSS ADMIRATION FOR PRESIDENT CARTER AND HIS STYLE OF LEADERSHIP. ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES THE ATTITUDE IS STILL ONE OF RESERVED JUDGMENT. ALTHOUGH THE RAWLYK HYPOTHESIS THAT THE CANADIAN PUBLIC IS SHOWING SINGS OF ATTACHMENT
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TO PRESIDENT CARTER MAY BE A PREMATURE JUDGMENT, ALL INDICATIONS ARE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER ENJOYS A VERY POSITIVE RATING WITH THE CANADIAN PEOPLE ON THE EVE OF PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO WASHINGTON.
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